

2023-2024 School Learning Plan

SCHOOL STORY

šx^wəx^waʔəs (swok-kvos) Thunderbird, Elementary is a designated Enhanced Services Tier One Inner City school on the north-east side of the city, residing on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm, Musqueam, Skwxwú7mesh, Squamish & səlilwətał, Tsleil-Waututh Nations. For 2023-2024 we have approximately 202 students whose families come from diverse cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds. Approximately 50% of the students are English Language Learners and 11% of students meet Ministry standards for requiring specialized support for their learning needs. We have a variety of programming to support all students in the regular classroom setting, such as a well-equipped sensory room, a fine motor area, and a collaborative space, the Learning Lab.

šx^wəx^waʔəs Thunderbird has a full-time Youth and Family Worker, Neighbourhood Assistant, and Literacy Teacher. We also have a full-time onsite food services coordinator. We offer a breakfast and a lunch program and provide a variety of healthy snacks to all learners. The hot breakfast program regularly serves over 20% of the school population and the hot lunch program caters to approximately 70% of the students. Additionally, Strong Start offers programming for preschool-aged children, and KidSafe provides out-of-school programming for school-aged children for a limited number of referred students during prolonged breaks.

The school shares the site with the Thunderbird Community Centre and works closely with community center staff to plan after-school programs and day camps during prolonged breaks and professional development days. The community center also has before and after-school care, as well as a preschool program. We have and will continue to work collaboratively with the Community Schools Team and have many close partnerships with community groups and agencies such as Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC), and the Sarah McLachlan School of Music.

Students also enjoy presentations on environmental issues from the City of Vancouver and work closely with an Artist in Residence, exploring the commonalities shared between us, and looking at how the differences between us can forge a deeper community connection through the discovery of self and how we fit together. Further, we provide leadership opportunities through participation in the Student Council, PA announcers, playground leaders and equipment monitors. Additionally, we have a thriving sports program, offering many opportunities to participate in team and individual sports at the school district level.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS?

The learners come from diverse and rich cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Approximately half of the learners speak a language other than English at home, and receive additional language supports.

ᓃᓂᓄᓂᓄᓂ Thunderbird also has a significant Indigenous population with a proud connection to place and culture. We work with the Indigenous Enhancement Worker and outside Indigenous supports to increase our knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions through a variety of cultural and historical teachings. ᓃᓂᓄᓂᓄᓂ Thunderbird has a strong commitment to reconciliation and works within the lens of the First Peoples Principles of Learning to guide the work.

As school, we can see that Language Arts scores in reading and writing, are low to moderate.

AS A SCHOOL COMMUNITY, WE ARE WORKING ON THE FOLLOWING TO:

Improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy, physical and mental well-being, and belonging

Our goal is to increase reading fluency and comprehension

As a staff, we are examining literacy strategies that introduce explicit instruction in phonics, reading, and writing. We are exploring what best-practice strategies can we learn and implement as a staff to increase student learning and achievement in reading?

Teachers are exploring approaches that highlight the importance of foundational skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, language, and vocabulary, with emphasis placed on these skills in primary grades (K–3) to ensure a strong foundation for reading. These goals are integral to the *VSB Responsive Literacy Framework K-7*.

In response to the English Language Arts (CSL), and Reading data, we are focusing on student learning and achievement in core curricular area of Language Arts, specifically looking at reading scores, exploring reading instruction and intervention, that is both universal and targeted.

This goal links to the Vancouver School Board’s Education Plan to improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by ...

- Encouraging students to reach beyond previous boundaries in knowledge and experience.
- Increasing literacy, numeracy, and deep, critical, and creative thinking.
- Ensuring the alignment among school, district, and provincial education plans.
- Reporting student results about performance, well-being, and outcomes to the community and using the results to improve the quality and effectiveness of the education and support provided to students.

This also goal aligns with the First People’s Principles of Learning in the following areas:

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place)
- Learning involves patience and time
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one’s actions.

Further, it connects to the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement:

The Vancouver Board of Education will provide equity of opportunity for Aboriginal students and be committed to the ongoing development of best-practice strategies for instruction, improvement, and inclusion.

Improve equity

ᓃᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ Thunderbird's School Learning Plan and the VSB Education Plan both focus on creating equity within the school, and the school district at large. Students at ᓃᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ have relatively low proficiency in reading. To help increase students' scores and to help create greater success in outcomes the school is provided with a literacy enhancement teacher to help with skills and strategies for our students in English Language Arts. With this help, our teachers offer initiatives and opportunities targeting literacy throughout the year. Examples of these are Family Literacy Night and Books for Breakfast, which engage both students and caregivers and are intended to increase the joy of reading and home reading. Also, we provide equal and equitable access to books in the library and an online reading program, IXL, to track student progress.

Continue on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit

At Thunderbird, we strive to increase our knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions through a variety of cultural and historical teachings. This goal aligns with the District's goals but is of particular significance in our community because many families are of Indigenous ancestry. This goal is practiced each day in a variety of ways, as we engage with community and district resources to deliver a well-rounded program which keeps the First Peoples Principles of Learning focal to all we do.

We have explored and provided a variety of experiences for students and the community:

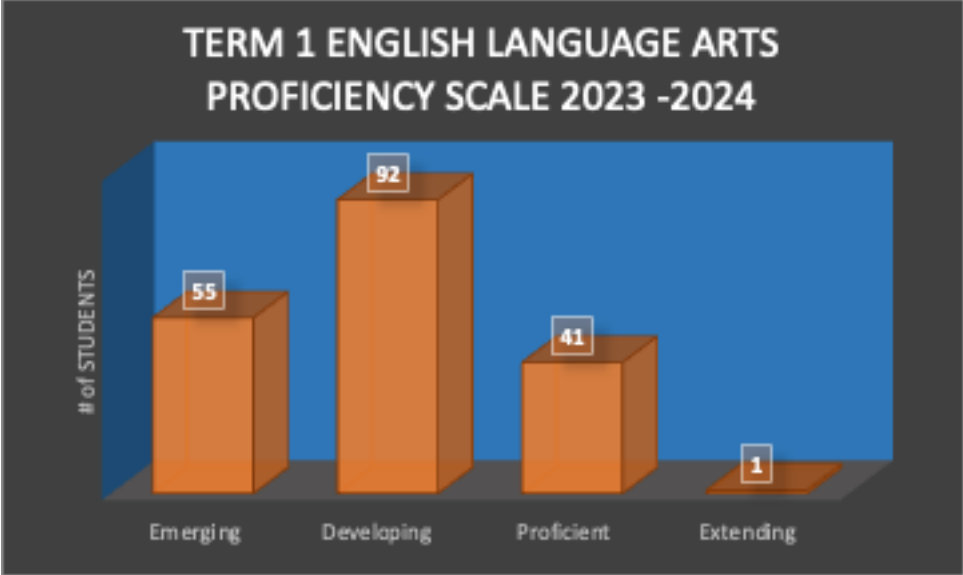
- Orange Shirt Day – awareness of residential schools and stories of survivors
- Stories – listening and sharing of personal stories by staff/students/ parents in the community.
- Daily Indigenous acknowledgement at the beginning of the day, at whole school events, assemblies, and meetings
- The daily reading of one of the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in child-friendly language
- Purchase of indigenous resources/books and share with staff/students.
- Truth and Reconciliation Day Assembly
- National Indigenous Peoples Day Assembly
- First Nations Principles of Learning incorporated in all inquiries.
- Drumming
- Indigenous Garden
- Development and review of Indigenous Success Plans for Indigenous students in Grades 1, 2, 4 and 6

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE'RE ON TRACK?

Through the collection of year-over-year report card data and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we will create a baseline for achievement in reading scores and English Language Arts and examine subsequent scores to analyze and gauge student learning and progression throughout the year, and year-over-year, at ᓃᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ Thunderbird.

Using First Term 2023-2024 Student Report Card Data, we see that in English Language Arts, 28% of students are at the Emerging level of achievement, 47% of students are at the Developing level, 21%

are at the Proficient level, and less than 1% are at the Extending level. When examining reading achievement using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we found that 63.8% of students were below grade level expectations, 26% of students were at grade level, and 10.2% of students were above grade level, during the same period. The data indicates a need for targeted and consistent efforts in literacy instruction and best-practice strategies.



Third Term Data:

Spring 2023-2024 data showed some growth in the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment scores in English Language Arts and Reading. When examining reading achievement using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, we found after a year of school 63.8% of students were below grade level expectations, 26% of students were at grade level, and 10.2% of students were above grade level,

during the same period. The data indicates a need for targeted and consistent efforts in literacy instruction and best-practice strategies.

Improve equity

Our equity goal will be tracked using report card and Student Learning Survey data, and participation in schoolwide literacy initiatives, such as Books for Breakfast and Family Literacy Night.

Continue on our journey of reconciliation with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit

We will promote and enhance our understanding of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge by seeking out opportunities to work with local Indigenous people and experts to guide us in our journey of increasing our knowledge, awareness, appreciation of, and respect for Indigenous histories, traditions, cultures, and contributions. We will continue to work in framework Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, First Peoples Principles of Learning, Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and the VSB's Education Plan 2026 to lead us in the work needed to move reconciliation forward at ᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐᓄᓐ Thunderbird.

Analyzing Student Learning Survey Data, will allow us to remain on track, and know where our students are in their journeys,

Currently evidence of our understanding of Indigenous worldviews and knowledge can be seen through the student's acknowledgement of their own learning where it is self-reported on the 2023 Student Learning Survey that 82% of grade 4 students and 49% grade 7 students see that they are sometimes, most of the time, or all of the time, learning about Indigenous People. These numbers show us that while we are doing many great things, such as listening to story tellers, creating Indigenous art, and learning of Indigenous culture and ways of knowing, there is work to be done. As school we have and will continue to engage Indigenous perspectives and weave them into our learning, especially amongst our intermediate student body.